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HAS UNITARIANISM DONE ITS WORK?

A Sermon

PREACHED TO THE CHURCH OF THE DISCIPLES, BOSTON,

BY

JAMES FREEMAN CLARKE.

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION,
BOSTON.

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"The object of the American Unitarian Association shall be to diffuse the knowledge and promote the interests of pure Christianity; and all Unitarian Christians shall be invited to unite and co-operate with it for that purpose." — ARTICLE I. *of the By-Laws of the American Unitarian Association.*

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HAS UNITARIANISM DONE ITS WORK?

1 Cor. 8:6. — "To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him."

I read in the *Independent*, a few weeks since, an article written by the minister of some church in the West, the purpose of which was to show that Unitarianism has done its work, and is no more needed. He admitted that when it first came it had a work to do which needed to be done, which was to oppose what he called hyper-Calvinism — which I suppose means ultra-Calvinism. But that work being done, and there being now few or no hyper-Calvinists, Unitarianism has nothing left for it to do. This writer adds, to make his case stronger, that most of the Unitarian churches in the West are dead, and that those in the East are dying.

I have, therefore, thought that it might be well to examine this question, and to ask whether the work of the Unitarian denomination is done, or whether it has anything left to do.

And, in the first place, I must express my doubt whether the work of this body was, at first, exactly that which this writer represents it to have been. I do not think its main work was to oppose hyper (or ultra)-Calvinism, but to oppose the whole system called Orthodox, and especially to oppose Calvinism pure and simple. I question whether there is such a thing as hyper-Calvin-

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ism. Genuine Calvinism, as taught by Calvin himself, as set forth in the Westminster Confession, as held to-day by the whole Presbyterian Church, goes as far as anything can go in that direction. To make this plain, let us ask what is Calvinism.

1. Calvinism, as set forth in the creed of the Presbyterian Church, declares that "the guilt of Adam's sin was *imputed,* and his corrupt nature *conveyed*" to all his posterity, so that we are all, by nature, "utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil." This is the doctrine of original sin and total depravity.

2. This corrupt nature, inherited from Adam, makes us all guilty, so as to deserve "the wrath of God," and "all miseries, spiritual, temporal, and eternal." Hence it is taught that men, women and children who are not converted will go into hell, there to suffer torments forever. This is the second point of Orthodoxy — the doctrine of *everlasting punishment.*

3. The third is, that man is utterly unable to convert himself by any effort he can make. He can only be converted by Divine favor. This is the doctrine of *irresistible grace.*

4. As man can do nothing to convert himself, and as God must in every case do this work, it follows that if some men are converted and saved, and others not, it is not because of anything they do, or omit to do, but only because God chooses to save some, and does not choose to save others. This is the Calvinistic doctrine of *election and reprobation.*

5. The fifth doctrine essential to Calvinism is that of the vicarious atonement. This means that, in order to enable God to forgive penitent sinners, it was necessary that a Divine being should suffer in their place, and so make satisfaction to the offended justice of God. Justice

being satisfied, the Divine mercy was then able to forgive those whom God had selected and had converted by his irresistible grace.

This is the substance of Calvinism. Anything less than this is not Calvinism. If you say that man is not wholly evil by nature, but that there is some good left in him, then by that goodness he can help to convert himself; and consequently it does not require irresistible grace to convert him. He also, in this case, helps to make his election sure, and so the Calvinistic doctrine of absolute Divine election drops away.

Now, this scheme of doctrine is essentially held by all the great churches which claim to be Orthodox. The Presbyterian churches of the whole world have just met in a council in Philadelphia. They all hold as their creed the Westminster Catechism. The council refused to relinquish this creed or alter it. They declared it to be, in the main, just what they believed.

Talk of ultra-Calvinism! Can there be any statement more barbarous than this: Every child born is born totally defiled and sinful, in consequence of the sin of the first man and woman. He is created by God totally evil, for God, I suppose, not Adam, is, after all, our creator. God having thus created us totally evil, will punish us with eternal sufferings for being so created, — except a few, or many of us, who are chosen to be saved, not because we are better than others, but simply from a Divine caprice. This is the doctrine of simple Calvinism, not of ultra-Calvinism. This is the doctrine of the creed held by all the Presbyterians in the United States, and by every Congregational church which claims to be Calvinist. It is held by the vast majority of the Baptist churches. The ninth article of the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England and Episcopal Church of the United States declares that for the original sin which is

in every man's nature he deserves damnation. Another article teaches, with equal plainness, the doctrine of election. And, in truth, we may say that, of all the great churches called Orthodox, only the Methodist Church has, from the first, opposed and resisted Calvinism. Let the Methodists have that credit.

No doubt very many preachers, and a vastly greater number of laymen in the Orthodox churches, do not believe any of these Calvinistic doctrines. But, as churches, they accept them all, proclaim them all, and, whenever they meet in conference or council, defend them all. For it is a curious fact that men, as members of an ecclesiastical body, will insist on retaining doctrines which they have long since given up as individuals. Thus you will scarcely find a minister of the Church of England who will admit that he believes the Athanasian Creed; and yet no convocation of that body has ever been willing to surrender it. It is so in the Roman Church. A large number of delegates to the Vatican Council went there wholly opposed to the doctrine of Papal infallibility; yet in the final vote only one or two voted against it.

So long, then, as such doctrines as these stand in the creeds, and so long as the churches refuse to modify them, it seems to me that the work of the Unitarian denomination is not complete. It is bound to declare that little children are not born totally depraved, corrupt, and exposed to the wrath of God. It is bound to teach that if we inherit evil tendencies from those who precede us, we inherit good tendencies too; that if every wrong action increases the tendency downward, every good and right action adds to man's tendency upward. We are called on to teach that inherited evil may be, and is, a source of depravity, but cannot be accepted as guilt. Depravity which is born with us, and which runs in our

blood, is not something to excite God's anger, but much rather his pity. Unitarianism is still needed to proclaim that God is the Universal Father, who has no partialities, no favoritism, whose sun shines on the evil and good, and whose rain falls on the just and unjust. Unitarianism is wanted to oppose the Calvinistic view of the Eternal Father, as being unchristian and false to the teaching of Jesus. It is needed to resist the dark doctrine of an eternal hell, and to declare that it is the Divine purpose to save every man from sin and misery just as soon and as much as the man himself is willing to co-operate in his own salvation. It is needed to teach that no honest error can be accounted a wrong in the sight of God; that he desires all men to inquire freely, to look for all truth, to think for themselves, and that God values sincerity far more than he does Orthodoxy. And Unitarianism is also still needed to teach with greater emphasis than ever before that the only way of salvation is by a good life, and that in the great day of account we shall not be asked what we have believed, but what we have done; and that he who has fed the hungry, clothed the naked, who has been faithful, honest, pure, and true, will stand higher than those who only make loud profession; or those who lay stress on church, ritual, ceremony, and a precise orthodoxy of belief.

One of the purposes for which the Unitarian body was formed was to declare the simple unity of God, as against every form of the Trinity. The doctrine of the Trinity is nowhere taught in the Bible; it was unknown to the apostles and the early church; it did not appear until three centuries after the death of Jesus; it was a compromise between the monotheism of the Jews and the polytheism of the Greeks and Egyptians. It has been a stumbling-block and an obstacle in the church; it has confused the minds of worshippers, thrown a mystery

around the simple gospel of Jesus, and is contrary to all sound reason.

I know that this doctrine, too, is fading slowly out of the Christian consciousness. It is really believed in the old church form by a very small part of intelligent Christians of all denominations. It is explained away into a philosophical symbol by very many who claim to be Trinitarians. Yet every Sunday, in every one of the two or three thousand Episcopal churches in the United States, worship is addressed to a being unknown to the four Gospels, or the Epistles of Paul, Peter, James and John. Christian worshippers in their solemn prayers call for help on the "Holy, Blessed and Glorious Trinity, three persons and one God." No doubt they mean to worship the God and Father of Jesus Christ, the one, only, Supreme Being. But in so sacred an act as prayer is anything right to be said and repeated which tends to confuse the mind of the worshipper, and to divert the thought and heart from Him who is "the one God and Father of all, above all, and through all, and in us all"? So long as this continues, the Unitarian protest has not become obsolete.

But the negative work of Unitarianism is the smallest part of what it has done. It has taken a new view of Christianity, and has taught that view to all Christian denominations. We are taunted with being a small body. The pioneers in an army are a small body compared with the whole army corps. The acorn is a small body compared with the oak. But the few pioneers enable the whole army to march onward. Out of the little acorn is developed the majestic oak. And so Unitarianism, by teaching that Christianity is not a creed or a ceremony, or an emotion, but a life, has turned the Christian Church in a new direction. By declaring that the glory of Christ was not any metaphysical consubstantiality with

God, but a Divine holiness, generosity and self-forgetting love, it has caused Jesus to be revered and loved as never before. It teaches that religion was made for man, and not man for religion; that Christianity is here to save, bless, and comfort men in this life; to bring peace to the troubled soul; to bring freedom to fettered minds; to inspire hope, manliness, courage; to awaken the human mind to progress; to create a better civilization; and not to appease the wrath of God, or make an atonement to his justice, so as to bring it into harmony with his mercy; not to enable us to escape the wrath of an angry God hereafter, and avoid the torments of a future hell. By giving this nobler view of the purpose of Christianity Unitarianism has given a new impulse and a new life to the church. It has opened to it a new and better future. It has answered in the best way the arguments of unbelievers by taking from them their motives for unbelief. It has emphasized goodness as the essential element in the teaching of Jesus. It has denounced the heresy which disdained human goodness as being only mere morality. It has restored the original glory of the Gospel, which consisted in making humanity the sister of piety. It has taught that the service of God is perfect freedom, and that there is no sight on earth so well pleasing to God as an honest, truthful, generous, self-forgetting man or woman.

Is this work done? Is there not need of more of it? I still hear of popular preachers who declare that bloodshed is the one central idea of Christianity; that the goodness of God consisted in pardoning man when he had chastised his own innocent son in his place. I still see ecclesiastical bodies excommunicating men who think that the Book of Genesis or the Book of Kings was written a few centuries later than has commonly been supposed. I still see the letter of the Bible exalted above

its spirit, and an outcry made if anything is said against its geology or zoölogy, or geography, or chronology. I see that it still requires courage in men belonging to the Orthodox churches to suggest that the Father of all Mercies does not maintain in some part of the universe an eternal hell in which to torment his children forever. I find sensible women teaching in popular novels that a little child which has been baptized is safer if it dies than if it had not been baptized; as though God were an evil being who wished to hurt it, but was prevented from doing so by the charm of a little magical water. Here, to-day, in the heart of Christendom, these calumnies against the Infinite Father are still honestly taught to his children. Is there not needed one denomination at least to resist and oppose them?

There is a wide and growing estrangement in most Christian countries between the advanced thought of men and their religious faith. One of the most dangerous symptoms of the time is the manifest hostility of science to religion, — the alienation of thinking men, scholars, writers, from the churches. In France, England, Germany, this is more and more the case. Here, in New England, down to this time, a different spirit has prevailed. Our historians, our poets, our scholars, our scientific men have been believers in some rational and liberal form of Christianity. Am I mistaken in thinking that the teachings of Channing, Walker, Dewey, and their brethren have had much to do with it? I cannot but think that their generous views, their trust in freedom, their exaltation of the Gospel to the universal plane of humanity and love, has helped thinking men and women to remain Christians.

Yesterday I attended the funeral of my friend and classmate, Benjamin Peirce. He was the greatest mathematician in our land, perhaps in the world; one of the

first astronomers of the time; a man so profound and far-reaching that few were able even to follow the course of his thought. Brought up in the Unitarian church, he remained faithful to the last to his religious convictions. He was an humble, trusting, loving, but free and rational believer in the Gospel. In his mind, science and religion were one. His was no cold materialism, but his thought was filled with the life of the soul. His science was inspired with spiritual convictions, and reached upward to God and to immortality. If Unitarianism had any part in producing such a result as this, does it not deserve to be maintained?

The first Unitarian church in America was established in Boston less than a hundred years ago. Other Unitarian churches then came, till Boston and Massachusetts became the centre and fountain of this movement in behalf of liberty, humanity, and reason. Here, also, in Boston, began most of the reforms, benevolent and philanthropic, which have distinguished our time — reform in education, the temperance societies, anti-slavery societies, prison discipline reforms, and movements to help the insane, the blind, and all human sufferers. Was this an accident, was it a chance coincidence, that where the religion of moral reform was taught, moral reform followed? The leaders of these reforms have often been Unitarians. Horace Mann, the leader of the educational reform; Dr. Howe, the friend of the blind; John Pierpont, the fearless advocate of temperance; Dr. Channing, the champion of freedom; Dorothea Dix, the reformer of prisons and insane asylums; Theodore Parker, the advocate of the slave, — these have all been Unitarians.

And is it an accident, a chance coincidence, that the church which stood for freedom of thought should have had the honor of producing so many of the leading thinkers and writers of the country; historians like

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Bancroft, Hildreth, Prescott, Motley; poets like Bryant, Longfellow, Lowell, Pierpont, and many others? If not, then is it desirable that this source of thought and action should be dried up?

Many of our young people, who have grown up amid these advantages, may not realize what they owe to such influences. Unitarians in Boston sometimes leave the Unitarian church and go to some other church, if they happen to find the preacher more to their taste. They have a right to do so, and if it is a question of religious life, they ought to do so. But before doing this, they should ask whether they do not owe something to the cause which these Unitarian churches represent. Is it only a question of personal satisfaction, or is it not also a question of truth, of freedom, of progress, of humanity?

I do not claim for Unitarianism any monopoly of liberal and rational religion. I gladly see that in all denominations great numbers are to be found as independent thinkers, as free from all superstition, as any of ourselves. I thank God for the vast progress made in this direction within the last fifty years. But, in other churches, men have to struggle long for their liberty, and only the strongest can attain to it. "With a great sum they obtain this freedom." But we Unitarians are "free-born." Other men have labored; we have entered into their labors. Those who have fought their way out of the narrow limits of their old belief, and broken the fetters of Orthodoxy, long retain the scars of that severe conflict. Often there remains in their soul a sense of bitterness, a feeling of prejudice against the old faith, which may easily carry them too far. Ought not we, who have been taught from childhood to see only in God our dearest friend, one not to be feared, but loved, who have been taught to read our Bible with perfect freedom, and to

see in Jesus a Master because he is most full of all truth and all goodness, — ought not we to be grateful for this opportunity and education? And ought we not to do what we can to give to others what we have received?

Hitherto, the Unitarian body has wanted organization. It has run to individualism, and has needed more of co-operative methods. It was the object of the conference recently held at Saratoga to introduce among us more of this organic life. A few years, I think, will find our churches much more united, active, and efficient than they are now. We do not want union without freedom, nor freedom without union; but what we need in the church, as in the State, is freedom and union, one and inseparable.

When I entered my ministry, the first thing almost that I heard from my Orthodox friends was, that Unitarianism was dying out. That same piece of information I have been receiving ever since, and that is what we are still being told to-day. When we saw at Saratoga some 1500 Unitarians who had come from all parts of the country, drawn by their interest in their common faith, it did not seem as if our denomination was rapidly approaching its end. But, however that may be, our business is not to ask whether we are prosperous, but whether we are right. It is not popularity we are seeking, but truth. No movement which has lifted the world, reformed society, helped in the progress of man, has ever been very popular. For a long time its supporters have struggled with opposition; they have been a feeble people; they have been taunted with their small numbers, their little influence. But if they had the truth on their side they cared not, but went forward, sure of ultimate triumph. The honest man, the man who loves the truth, does not wait till popularity and success arrive. He is

willing to share in the day of small things, knowing, as Emerson says, that when the single man plants himself on his instincts, the great world at last comes round to him.

"For to side with truth is noble, when we share her meagre crust;
Ere her cause brings fame and profit, and 'tis prosperous to be just;
Then it is the brave man chooses, while the coward stands aside;
Doubting in his abject spirit, till his Lord is crucified."

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THE

DOCTRINE OF PRAYER.

BY

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AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION,

BOSTON.

"The object of the American Unitarian Association shall be to diffuse the knowledge and promote the interests of pure Christianity; and all Unitarian Christians shall be invited to unite and co-operate with it for that purpose." — ARTICLE I. *of the By-Laws of the American Unitarian Association.*

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THE DOCTRINE OF PRAYER.

Two facts impress us when we begin to think about prayer. On the one hand, there was never so much confusion of thought as to what prayer means; there were never so many doubts and difficulties to prevent people from praying; the justification of prayer to the reason was never so urgently demanded. On the other hand, the love of prayer, in those who continue to pray, seems to be, if possible, more profound than ever, and especially in those who are the most fearless and even radical seekers of truth.

This is the more noticeable, because, since prayer belongs to the sphere of the sentiments, one might easily pardon the pious feeling that would save it from the approach of criticism. It is like love, one might say, which does not want to stop in its course and to reason. Better go on loving than ask why you love; and so better simply go on praying than stop and ask why you pray. For sentiments are like flowers, it is said, and will die beneath the breath of criticism. It is fine to see that this is not the case; for real love is deeper when reason shows its basis in facts, and religious feeling runs freer when reason has straightened its course, and shown the law of its being.

We are not free, however, to choose whether or not we will ask questions about prayer. The history of the development of religion presents so many significant changes that no one can be excused from sometimes

wondering in what manner men are going to continue to pray. Certain of the highest conceptions which we have learned, as they bring a new valuation of the terms of religion, demand that our doctrine of prayer shall reconcile itself with them.

One of these conceptions is the unity of the world. As long as the world did not seem to be a unity, and hostile tribes had their rival gods, Bel, Baal, or Jehovah, the stronger of whom would show himself by giving his votaries victory, it was permissible to pray for all sorts of conflicting interests, — to pray for sunshine when your neighbor prayed for rain; to pray for the ruin of the very men who might be praying for your own ruin. Monotheism did not at first carry the idea of complete unity. You might still beat your enemies by praying harder than they; your prayer might change the will of the Almighty, and make him repent.

But we have arrived at a conception of the unity of God which seems to cut off such prayer altogether. Whatever is not just, is not beneficent, is not well for the whole universe as truly as for us, no prayer of ours, we think, will ever bring. Whereas, if with one single purpose all things are ruled by God in beneficence, why shall we not trust him to give us whatever we need; and why should we ask for anything which, if it is best, will indeed surely come to us, and, if not best, cannot be?

Another kindred conception which demands that the doctrine of prayer shall be harmonized with it is law. As long as things were thought to come by caprice or by chance, it seemed permissible to pray for all sorts of unlikely and impossible things. You could pray and not work, and hope to surpass those who worked. The element of the supernatural might be looked for anywhere to enter in and set natural means at defiance. Had it not been permitted to prayer to roll back the flow of a river and the tides of the sea, to stop the sun in its

course, to bring rain, and restore the dead? Meanwhile, for thousands of years, men were learning the facts that those who prayed did not reap, but those who planted; that those who won the victories fought more than they prayed; that everywhere an inevitable chain of causes led up to every event, no one of which could be left out and the event remain the same. There is thus no short cut by which one can avoid the law of a thing. The veracity of God would seem impeached, if one could get by intervention what has been made to depend upon a regular sequence of means.

This is so true, that those who feel obliged to believe in historical miracles and in the general efficacy of prayer are found to limit its particular and present application within a very narrow range of actual possibilities. Few thoughtful people probably join any longer in prayer for rain who really think that their prayers will make any difference, or expect anything of God for the accomplishment of which they do not take the regular means.

Where, then, shall we draw the line between legitimate and illegitimate objects of prayer? Shall we not leave out of our prayers the petition for material blessings, and simply limit our asking to moral and spiritual things? Even this latter region is searched by inquiry, as it is seen to be also equally traversed by laws. Is it possible, people doubtfully ask, to influence an absent friend through our prayers, to shield him from temptation or convert him? Thus, through all the history of religion, a constant change has gone on in the elements which are supposed to bring success; there is always less of the supernatural and more of the natural, always more work and less prayer. Where shall be the vanishing point in this process of change?

The great Christian idea of unselfishness has also, strangely enough, brought its limitations upon old methods and ideas of prayer. You have no right, it says, to

pray for anything merely private and personal; you have no right to want anything that shall not be for the good of your fellow-men. And the very sublimity of the ideal of such prayer somewhat narrows the range of things to be prayed for, and condemns and discourages the prayers of those who have not attained unselfishness.

And then, besides, as the thought of God has slowly but vastly altered, the doctrine of prayer has had to adapt itself to this enlarged thought. Once there was a being, now here, now there, on the top of Olympus, or in the Holy of Holies, or sitting in state on an actual throne, surrounded by angels in heaven, before whom prayers ascended. If the highest minds conceived of God as filling the heavens and present everywhere, at most the heaven of the Hebrews, and the universe which Augustine knew, were small, compared with the regions of space, with its infinite distances, with which modern astronomy has made us familiar. The God seemed more accessible who lived in the sky, and might at any time appear out of the clouds, than the God who is present in all the myriads of distant suns as truly as here in this world. And the new infinite is infinitely vaster than the old infinite. No wonder that men have craved the presence of the saints, or the Holy Mother, or a Christ, somewhat limited and nearer than God, to whom they might pray.

I hardly need to touch upon the difficulties of a further scepticism, which not only thinkers, but common people, and even children discover, and which few perhaps in our day are quite free from? Is there a God? they whisper. How can we be assured, since no one can ever see him? And if he is, being so infinite, how can we think that he hears what we say?

I have tried to present, as clearly as possible, the difficulties which beset the idea of prayer. Let us see what

admissions they seem to require. In the first place, the idea of prayer, considered as a supernatural means of getting specific benefits, must be pronounced not only irrational, but irreligious. It is inconceivable that a just and beneficent God, worthy to be called our Father, should make blessings or success depend upon the arbitrary fact that a formal petition had been filed. We can conceive indeed that, if one of two mothers thought more of her son, loved him better, had higher ideals for him, was more devout in her spirit, and trained him more carefully, this son would prove to be a truer man than the son of the mother who cared less for all these higher things; but we cannot conceive — the mothers being, in respect of training, high ideals, love, and devoutness, equal — that God should make any distinction in his blessings, because one asked him to bless her child, and the other simply took his blessing for granted. Much less can we conceive of two farmers, each of whom faithfully planted and tended his farm, that God should make any distinction in the harvest between them, because one prayed, and the other, who worked equally hard, simply trusted to God's laws of the harvest.

We must pronounce as equally irrational and irreligious the idea that prayer, as an act of worship or a form of words, brings about some difference in God's feelings toward the worshipper, or makes God favorable, as though one were safer for praying. Let me not be misunderstood. An essential difference has taken place when a man who has been vain or frivolous becomes serious and reverent, — a difference in the man himself, a difference in his relations to the world about him, and, you may say, to God; but no essential difference can be conceived to take place by the mere fact that he has repeated a prayer.

The fact is, the greatest misunderstanding about the nature of prayer has come from men's thought that the

words and the form of the prayer affected God and were for God's sake, as though God would not know unless you told him, or as though he were susceptible of being changed or influenced by our words. It would hardly seem to need to be said, on the contrary, that the words are not for the sake of God, but for the sake of man. Jesus expressed this clearly enough, when he said, "Your heavenly Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him." The analogy of the domestic and all other friendly human relations shows the same thing. The wiser, kinder, and fairer the parent, the less he needs that his children should tell him their wishes. Their attitude toward him he cares for; but for their words, only as these express their sympathy, which, indeed, if he is sensitive, he hardly asks to have put into words. And the nearer his children come into sympathy with him, the fewer things they find it necessary to petition him to do or even to explain. How, then, can any one suppose that God, who presumably knows men's thoughts, feelings, and necessities with an accuracy which no language can express, and who, whatever man's wishes, is only going to do what is best for the whole world of men, needs our words or is affected by them?

But the words and form of prayer are only for the sake of men: because without words men cannot think; because words make a clearer channel in which their feelings may run, and, if true, express feelings; because words give definiteness to their wishes, aspirations, and intentions, and because the form of their worship may help or else hinder the worshipful spirit.

We have thus ruled out as irreligious the idea of prayer as a shorter way to get what God has made to depend upon work, thought, and natural means, or as a method of supplementing inferior character or narrower intelligence. We have ruled out as irreligious the idea

of prayer, as constituting a difference in God's favor between men otherwise equally just, true, energetic, and worthy. We have ruled out the idea as irreligious, that the words and forms of prayer affect and influence God. Let us see now what purely rational elements in prayer we have left.

I begin with the most common and widely recognized element in prayer. It is some sort of a Want: various wants are the stuff out of which all the highest forms of prayer eventually come. It is to express the want, and to make it more definite, that we use the words, but the want makes the prayer. It is a call for help. To a beneficent God, it would be a prayer, whether expressed or not. Neither would it make a particle of difference to whom it was addressed, whether to an idol, or a patron saint, or to Jesus, or to Buddha, provided only it was a real want. It might be a very low or material want or dread. It might be unworthy, foolish, or impossible. Of all the prayers which you hear, you might make a division between those which expressed men's honest desires and those which expressed no real desire whatever; and these last would not be prayers. You might look into the homes of a great city; and, seeing the misery, poverty, and pain, you would hear a thousand mute but most eloquent prayers from people who did not know that they prayed, but only wanted, — they hardly knew what.

All actual prayers fall into two classes: one, of desires for those things which are unnecessary and hurtful; and the other, of rightful and healthy desires. Now, it is the law of the world, — it is at least a great, well-known tendency of things, and a marvellous tendency it is, — that the bad, false, morbid desires come to naught; even when they seem to be met, they eventually defeat themselves. Whereas the real, healthy wants and desires, in

exact proportion to their definiteness and intensity, always are met. It is not merely a word quoted from Scripture, "Ask, and ye shall receive." Jesus quoted it out of the more ancient book of nature. Like all other rules, it has its limitations; but it is precisely the law upon which every kind of success and all our hopes of future progress for our race are built. Within certain lines (and no one knows how far they go, or what unknown possibilities they admit) we believe that whatever man wants that can add to his comfort, power, or happiness, he shall achieve. The man who wants most — that is, who prays most — other things being equal, shall have most. The nation or generation which desires most — that is, which prays hardest — shall work out greatest progress.

It is in this sense, in the nature of things, that prayers have their answer. For, whatever is good, there is a way of getting it, or laws that condition it. If you believe in God, it is he who inspires the want, and it is his laws by which the wants are met. You throw the force of your want for a thing, therefore, into the ordained way, or into obeying its laws, and you shall have it. You want a harvest, and you turn your want into the channel of the law of the harvest. You want to shield a child from temptation, and you obey the laws of the building of character and of moral influence. You who turn the force of the most intense want most precisely into its constituted way of approach shall have more, and, I may say, shall please God better, than you whose want is meagre. You who want, and take no pains to set your want to work in the direction of its accomplishment, shall wait forever, till your want learns to express itself according to the law of the thing wanted. In short, an effectual prayer is, in its essence, a want or need which goes out into intelligent obedience of its eternal conditions.

We have purposely begun our analysis of prayer low down, and we have admitted at first into our conception a whole range of desires which seem unworthy. For a true doctrine of prayer must be comprehensive. It draws no impracticable, arbitrary lines between things holy and secular. It is not going to say to men, You shall only pray for spiritual blessings, but must not say anything about your daily bread. It is not going to forbid little children from asking the simplest things which they desire. It is not going to stop common men from beginning to pray till they have exactly learned what things are possible to get. But it takes in all sorts of desires. It recognizes the saving element of good in our desires for the things which are not best for us. It says, You either cannot pray at all, or you can pray for everything which you really want. In short, it begins just as everything most noble in this world begins, at the lowest stage, and waits for the development of higher and fuller conceptions.

Now let us suppose, without any thought yet of speaking our needs to God, but purely for our own benefit, for clearness of apprehension and definiteness of intention and plan, that we formed a habit of expressing our desires and wishes in words, — that mentally or orally, if you please, we considered for a few moments each morning what we most needed and what we proposed to do. Suppose a family were to put into definite words the things desirable for their happiness. Suppose the people of a community, being gathered together once a week, heard the definite statement of their common needs, for the fulfilling of which they purposed to labor. Such expression of men's needs and desires would not only be rational, but would actually help men to turn their energies into the channel of the proper conditions of successful work, or rather *such expression would itself be one of the conditions of success.* The

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definite agreement that the people of a community wanted just government or the amelioration of poverty would be a legitimate condition of turning their attention to the means by which these things could be had.

Leaving this element of prayer now, which consists of wants and expresses wants, we can go higher. A second element of prayer is Reverence. Whatever the Salvation Army may do or say to the contrary, a certain reverent feeling is essential to our thought of prayer. The facts of the universe beget reverence. It grows with our knowledge of the wonder, the power, the beauty, the unity, in the midst of which we are living. It grows with our sense of smallness and helplessness, with our dreads and terrors. It is born and grows out of the sense of mystery, which our utmost knowledge only serves to set off as more incomprehensible. It comes as we brood over the facts of human life and history, the solemn march toward death of all the nations, and the slow, unceasing conflict which has yielded us everything for which life is worth living. It is helped and encouraged by all grand and genuine words which express it. These, and other such things, make us wholesomely serious, forbid flippancy, and bring us, as it were, to our knees before — what shall I say to which every earnest mind will assent? — before the Infinite Nature around us.

Another rational element of prayer is Aspiration. In prayer, one sees ideals of moral character after which he struggles, and which put his present self to shame. There is a nobler life which he longs for, and which, it seems to him, he would give everything else to possess. We should be sorry for the man who had never felt these holier throbs of aspiration, nor ever cared to utter them. We should rather have our children die than never be stirred by these divine visions of noble living.

Unselfishness, as we have already noticed, is another element of prayer. To pray means that all one's sym-

pathies are quickened; that one sees the good of others; that one pities men's toil and sorrow; that one, choosing between the good of the world and his own private good, would prefer to put his private interests under. So far as this disinterested element comes into prayer, and prayer is the earnest longing after the highest welfare of others, it is rational. Whatever form of words helps toward expressing this disinterested feeling, reason accepts.

Moreover, prayer involves a certain Adjustment of ourselves to the ruling relations of life. This is probably its highest function. The ancient Christian form of words, "Thy will be done," expresses it. The Stoic thought of resignation covers it also. Man is uneasy and restless, unless he feels some bond which takes his life into unity with everything else. He cannot be happy or content as a mere detached individual or spectator. There is some instinct in him which seeks peace and harmony. In prayer, therefore, he puts passion aside; he ceases to fight and rebel against the inevitable, to push and to struggle to get where he does not belong. He faces the facts and trusts the laws of his being. It is as though he were a single instrument in a great orchestra, and prayer is the getting into tune. Words as before, if sincere, rationally express and direct this profound longing of our natures after unity.

We have risen now to an ideal of prayer which is sufficiently worthy, and also indisputably rational. In prayer, you enter into the wholesome mood of reverence, a mood true to the facts of your life; you aspire after the best examples of noble living; you take the whole brotherhood of man into your enlarged sympathies; you adjust your will into the nicest harmony with the facts, the requirements, and the laws of life: and in this ideal mood, combined of peace, unselfishness, and reverent feeling, you lay out before you and consider all the de-

sires of your heart. You distinguish between real wants and false; the real wants grow stronger, and you see with new clearness what to do. It is not Nirvana into which you have entered, in which consciousness is quenched and desires cease; but you have thrown yourself into complete connection with the heart-throb of the universe; you are stirred with its life, you are desiring with its great desires; you are working out its work, and move with its rhythmical movement.

I am not saying a word yet of God. I am only supposing, so far, a kind of prayer which would be as truthful and helpful and resting to Herbert Spencer as to Cardinal Manning. I am supposing a kind of prayer which Mr. Adler might, for aught I see, honestly admit in his school for ethical culture. I can conceive that such a minister or speaker, earnest, eager for goodness, intent on reform, free of self-interest and conceit, might, in a few sentences of what would be essentially prayer, express and deepen the earnestness, the humility, and the aspirations of his people, and join them as one in their common desires. I can conceive, without his once naming God, or saying *Thou* and *Thine*, that the words of his prayer should drive narrowness and selfishness out of their hearts, stir all their sympathies, and bring to the focus of wise action all their intentions. Not only this, but the occasional utterance of the purest feelings and most profound needs should set the tune, as it were, for the entire life of the congregation. It has been the pious thought of all times that prayer is not an occasional offering up of a series of petitions to the Almighty, but rather that devout, earnest, and disinterested attitude or mood, in which one should constantly live, and for the attainment of which all formal and oral prayers have their special worth.

I want you to see that the idea of prayer which we have reached is something more than the reflex action of

the mind on itself, as though a man were lifting himself in a basket. But there is something real, outside of one's self, in which the thoughts of prayer find their natural reaction. It is at every point the sense of a grandeur and power outside one's self, of ideals above one's self, of sympathies touching the whole world, of work to be accomplished, and far-reaching purposes, through which we are moved to pray. It is the motion of our spirits to go out into actual relations beyond and above themselves. A faith, very simple indeed, but real, underlies our prayer, that there is something with which, if we can bring ourselves into connection, our life will be fuller and more harmonious. So much of faith is implied in science, which supposes a ground of some sort of intelligible reality in its studies. So much of faith is implied in all schemes of philanthropy, in which the individual thinker and worker believes himself to be working out universal laws of progress, who would despair, if he did not think that the spirit of the universe worked toward progress, and that he was on the winning side. So, in all the highest movements of feeling, man goes out of himself in sublime quest of something grander to which his life belongs.

We are prepared now to go further, and say that prayer accomplishes something. The attitude which it involves is the attitude of the greatest success. It is the attitude in which all friction of obstacle outside or anxiety within is reduced to its minimum, and all things work together to help you. It is the attitude of seriousness, earnestness, and sensitiveness, in which one's best promptings and clearest thoughts come. The fact is, you are using in prayer a series of powerful natural means. The intent and eager fixing of the mind upon a thing, as we have already seen, is one of the sequences which are made to lead to the realization of that particular thing. It is undoubtedly the common element in all the curious

stories of faith — cures. We have never found out how far, by some species of subtle telegraphy, by some pull which mind has on mind, this intentness of will, required by prayer, may reach.

Though we have said nothing of God, we have come very close to it. We must have seemed to be leaving certain ragged edges of argument behind us; we have really been talking of God all along. What did we mean, for instance, by Reverence? Could we intelligently reverence or feel awe before mere forces or distances, however gigantic, or accumulations of matter? Could we feel reverence, if we were doomed to a purely atheistic or material conception of the universe, and were ourselves therefore greater than the unintelligent phenomena which we observed? Is it not before at least the possibility of infinite intelligence, thought, and will, pervading matter and space, and directing force, that we can feel proper reverence? Is not our sense of awe at the unknown possibilities of life which the mysteries of the universe suggest? We remarked earlier, that the idea of God, in its development from sensual forms, had at last seemed almost dissipated by the very immensity of the universe which he was supposed to fill. But, whatever we first seemed to lose in distance through this thought of immensity, we have more than regained in nearness by that same marvellous, modern conception of unity, which at first seemed to be bringing us difficulties in our thought of prayer. The same matter goes into combination in Sirius as here. The same laws govern it; knowing life here, we can at least guess what it is to the limits of space. Moreover, we belong each to this unity. It makes a difference, you may say, to the whole, what we do, or what becomes of us. In a sense more exact than even Jesus knew, no sparrow falleth to the ground unrecognized. Thus, instead of the old thought, that God was sometimes here and sometimes not, that certain

things were religious and all other things secular, that certain events were providential and other things not providential at all, we are learning at last to see the presence of God in all things and all history as the movement of his providence. It is this idea which rules our modern thought of prayer. In our needs, we are moved by the spirit of God. The work which we put forth is only the using of the divine forces, set ready to our hands. And our words are simply the expression of the fact that our lives are bound up in the life of God.

All this becomes emphasized, when we begin to entertain moral aspirations, see ideals of justice and righteousness, and own to the common pressure of conscience. The fact is, there are moral relations and laws, as we call them. There is a moral order, not only within us, but outside of us, one and the same, we conceive, in all worlds. The development of civilization has been a process, not of making this moral order and dictating these laws, but of discovering them and following their lead. A certain definite course of conduct, from which we cannot deviate with impunity, makes us one with this order. It makes no difference with the essential fact what our theories are, whether we are evolutionists or intuitionists. The fact of the moral order is the same, however we come to recognize it. The just, the pure, the unselfish, as we have already seen, have an actual harmony with the universe, which the unjust, the impure, and the covetous lack. It is not man who has created this fact of harmony, any more than man has created the ruling conditions of health. It is not a self-complacency worked up within our minds. It is more than a sense of sympathy with our fellows; for it would hold equally if all men abused and hated us. By some law of things, under which man lives, which has been urging him from the dawn of civilization, he is driven to find his highest harmony in conformity with an inexorable moral order.

I said that it would be prayer if we did not say God, if we simply let out our highest feelings, thoughts, and endeavors; if we only said, "We want health and life and goodness," and did not say, "Give Thou these things," and if we simply came into harmony with the moral order of the universe. I said that this would be rational and useful. But these impressive moral facts which we have stated do not leave us content to stop and say Nature, but draw us on to say Thought; do not leave us content to say the Universe, but draw us on to say Spirit; do not leave us content with the abstraction of a Moral Order, but draw us on to conceive of a Life into fellowship with which we come. For what is an eternal moral order, except as it presupposes an eternal life? or what is an infinite universe, except as a revelation of infinite thought? Use words we must. The word *God* besides being dear by use, sums up our thought that the ultimate fact or power, into whose unity everything is bound up, is alive, is intelligible, is righteous, and loves. True, all these words are makeshifts. How could they be anything else? But Reason not only does not forbid them, but calls them out of our whole vocabulery, and assures us that we have come short, at the best, of comprehending Him "who is all."

Suppose now, under the former idea of prayer, as the utterance of our desires and aspirations, and the loftiest mood of reverence, sympathy, and peace, we frankly recognize what that idea seems always to have contained and suggested, — this thought of the presence of the infinite life of God; that, as we look out on the mystery of being, we see it throbbing with his life; as we enter into the moral order, that we are conscious of the divine fellowship; admit that our desires are his inspiration; as we express and work out every honest and healthy desire, let us think of ourselves both as drawing upon his resources, and as co-workers with him; suppose that

our best intentions are recognized as the attuning of our wills into harmony with the infinite will. Suppose thus, that prayer is conceived as the thinking, willing, feeling, working, being, in unison with the Life of which we partake.

We said what prayer was not, and ruled out certain ideas of it as irreligious. We have said now what prayer is, and have ruled in, I think, those things for which it has been really precious to men. We have said that it is an actual relation of peace, harmony, friendliness, — whatever you may please to call it. We have said that, considered as a man's highest mood, or as the expression of that mood in words, it effects something and makes a difference ; that a man is more when he prays than when he does not pray, is therefore necessarily brought closer to the things which he needs, and therefore has more. And we have expressed our conviction that all the facts which we recognize, or have hinted to us, in prayer are best summed up in the idea of God, or in the closer words, "Our Heavenly Father," with whom prayer is communion.

This idea of prayer, moreover, is large and free. It does not restrict the subjects which prayer may take up. It bids men utter any real wants, from the hunger for daily bread and the fear of impending trouble, to the loftiest spiritual aspiration. It admits the artless words of childhood. It holds that nothing which interests man is trivial to the thought of the Spirit in whom the tiniest insect has life.

All this seems beautiful. It is worthy both of God and of man. It promises to be helpful, comforting, and inspiring. It would seem to meet and fulfil, better than anything else, all man's most profound longings. It specially meets that strange element of his nature which never is touched except by thoughts of the Infinite.

And yet, if this were all which one had to say of prayer, if one could merely make out ever so strong a case for its legitimacy, if one could show no reasons against it and many in favor, I am not prepared to say that we should be moved to pray. It is not as though prayer were a new thing in the world, pleading at the door for admittance, and reason were judging whether it might properly enter; but it has been in the world beyond man's remembrance, and belongs with sentiments as ancient as reason itself. It moves me that men's earliest voices, by some significant instinct, went out in prayer. It moves me that, under all changes, forms, and creeds, prayer, like religion itself, has endured. It moves me to see the worship of men, crying out of their distresses after God. It stirs us yet to read their ancient litanies.

The habit of prayer comes to us as a great fertilizing stream of holy traditions. We believe in it, as in everything else, on authority, because men to whom we look up as the purest tell us that they needed to pray in order to live. The Hebrew prophets are authorities on prayer, because prayer steadied them in wicked times. Jesus is an authority upon prayer, because without it we cannot see how such a life as his could have been possible. The great line of saints, from Paul to Channing and Rowland Williams and Theodore Parker, are authorities with one voice to recommend prayer and make men respect it. Admiring and imitating such men, living in their company, taking them as our ideals, we can hardly help praying. We say over and over, "God give us such lives." We come to church to say it. It does us good, whenever we say it. Said thus, as they said it themselves, our souls going out after God to express it, no other sentiment, no lower form of words means so much.

This brings me to say that we pray on the authority of our own experiences. Reason puts down the barriers.

Reason says, Pray, if you feel inclined; and then Feeling comes surging up to utter itself. All sorts of life-experiences are only half complete, unless they go out into prayer. Our troubles and disappointments, the great sacraments, as they have been called, of marriage, birth, and death, our delight in nature and music, the impulses of popular and patriotic feeling sweeping over us, the stories of heroism, the sudden dangers which bring us up with a start, — all such experiences move us to prayer, and are never so rich as when they most completely merge themselves in the purifying spirit of prayer. Then our burdens seem shared, man's toil and pain seem interpreted, and indefinite access of vigor, courage, and thought seem to flow in, as though indeed God were speaking to his children, and actual connection were made between our finite spirits and the universal life. Prayer thus seems, at least in those moments when we most truly pray, like the sweetest symphony, to soothe and to inspire.

This is not all. However much prayer did for us, if, when we had prayed, it left our reason obscured or made us less loyal to truth, however precious it was, we should hold ourselves bound to give it up. On the contrary, in the attitude of prayer, we see truths, facts, and relations with clearer than usual sight, and we never love truth so much or are nearer being ready to die for it; while as for all virtuous, courageous, and efficient action, as we have already seen, the mood of prayer is that in which we should like always to live.

Finally, I do not see how anything which can be said about prayer should be overwhelmingly convincing, except as one's prepossessions are directed, at least, toward the moral interpretation of life. Let me not be misunderstood to be advocating an attitude of partiality in investigating truth. I mean merely to remind you that the condition of soundness and health is always scientifi-

cally essential to prevent bias and impartiality. You must have sound eyes and steady nerves to see straight and measure exactly. You must have a sound mind, trained to love knowledge and truth, to be an accurate student. And, precisely in the same way, a man must have moral health and a righteous life, before he can appreciate the kind of evidence, and value rightly the impressions, which make the strength of religion.

This is what I mean by demanding certain moral prepossessions of men. For the whole argument of religion has been lifted above the old level of outward and miraculous evidences, and rests upon what we think the impregnable basis of the moral facts, the moral history, and the moral nature of man. But it is idle to talk to men about a moral order in the universe, who acknowledge no such moral order within. It is idle to prove a "power which makes for righteousness" to him who does not love righteousness. It is idle to lay down a doctrine of prayer, whose very essence is the rest and peace of a moral harmony, to him whose only wants are sensual and personal. And it is idle to prove the reality of prayer, itself a spiritual fact, to him who can only appreciate outward signs and wonders. Let us, then, who love to pray and want our children to pray, while teaching them the simple forms of words, underneath which the habit and spirit of actual prayer are developed, be even more patient to train them in stanch and truthful habits of character. For, if they once love honest character above everything else, their own life-experiences may be trusted to lead them up from the prattling of childhood, with its "Now I lay me down to sleep," to the most exalted form of devotion, and Jesus's sublime thought, "Thy will be done."

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THE

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

OF

CHILDREN.

BY

REV. MINOT J. SAVAGE.

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION,
BOSTON.

"The object of the American Unitarian Association shall be to diffuse the knowledge and promote the interests of pure Christianity; and all Unitarian Christians shall be invited to unite and co-operate with it for that purpose." — ARTICLE I. *of the By-Laws of the American Unitarian Association.*

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THE

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF CHILDREN.

There is one curious superstition concerning the matter of religious training that it seems to me important that I should notice. I meet it at almost every turn. It is one of the finger-marks of a crude, undeveloped, and unthinking liberalism. Parents tell me continually that they do not give their children any religious training, from the feeling that it is taking an unfair advantage of the child. They say, I propose to let my children grow up as far as possible unbiased. When they become of age, capable of thinking for themselves, then let them look over the world and choose what religion they will have, what their belief as to these great questions shall be. Now this might be all very wise and well, provided, in the nature of the case, it were not utterly impossible. Can you take one of your children and isolate him from all the rest of the world, and let him grow up till he is twenty years of age with no thought concerning God, concerning duty, concerning right or wrong, or worship or aspiration, with no thought concerning a future, and then can you suddenly place before him all the facts, the dreams, the imaginations, the hopes, the fears, of humanity in all the ages, and have him so situated and so constituted that he shall look over the whole field freely, without any prejudice, and choose that which is the best? If you should take a ball of putty, white and smooth and clean, and shape it as you wished, and then toss it from hand to hand, or let it fall

into the dust or mire of the street, and let any passer-by step on it or shape it as he would, and then at the end of a certain time suddenly endow it with life, and ask it to choose what shape it would hold, and whether it would be soiled or clean, you would be engaged in a rational operation as compared with this one of which I am speaking. Suppose a sculptor should take a piece of marble and stand it in front of his studio on the sidewalk, and should invite every passer-by to have a stroke at it with mallet and chisel, shaping it according to the fancy or the caprice of the moment, and then at the end of the year have it suddenly endowed with life, and ask it to choose what it would be, — the shape of a god or of a satyr, of beauty or ugliness, pure and white or stained and soiled, — this man would be rational as compared with the one who believes that you can let a child grow up until he is twenty unbiased, without absorbing any religious ideas or convictions, and then freely choose what he will be. If *you* do not bias the child, the first that he meets on the street, or in his school, or among his companions, will begin the work of biasing, of impression, of education, of training; for this is a continuous process. Whether you will or not, it is something over which you have no choice. It is something that will be done either wisely and well, or unwisely and ill.

These persons forget another thing, — that the child is born with the summed-up and inherited results of the tendencies of all the past. This brain, this heart, these bodies of ours, are not clean white pieces of paper, that the grown child can write on what he will. We are all palimpsests, that have been written on over and over and over again in all the ages of the past. We are the total result of thousands of generations, and we come to the beginning of this life with tendencies and biases and inclinations of every kind. It seems to me, then, that if you have any views, any convictions, any persuasions, as to right and wrong,

as to God, as to human character, as to destiny, that you think are worth holding, you should do your utmost to give these to your children. If you have none, of course I shall waste my words in talking to you, unless I can persuade you of the importance of becoming possessed of some as soon as possible. If you are doubtful about any of these convictions, then seek to remove these doubts. Seek to find out the truth, and remember that anything that is safe for you to hold is safe for your child to know. I am amazed, as I come in contact with parents, to find that they hold certain religious convictions themselves, and yet question the wisdom of telling them to their children. I would as soon teach my children false arithmetic, or false geography, or false astronomy, or false grammar, as teach them what I regard as false in religion. Teach your child the best, the noblest, the truest that you know, — the convictions of your own heart. Do not, of course, attempt to forestall natural growth and the unfolding of the childish mind, or force on it things that it is not able to comprehend. It has been my method always to be utterly frank with my children. I have never taught them what I did not believe myself. If they asked me if I believed a certain thing, and I did not, I said so frankly, as I would concerning anything else. If you wish to teach your children practical infidelity, to distrust you and to doubt the reality of your religious convictions, you can do it in no speedier way than by playing fast and loose with your child's first earnest, honest questionings concerning religious truth.

When is a child religiously educated? Let me try to outline what I mean by a child being religiously educated or trained.

I believe most thoroughly in a certain type of theology, certain views and conceptions of the world, certain methods of worship. I believe that it can be historically

demonstrated that certain methods, certain ways of thinking, certain conceptions of God and man and destiny, have played their part in helping on the world, and that certain others have hindered the development and progress of mankind; and yet, as earnestly as I believe all this, I do not think that this theological training is of the chiefest importance.

First, I believe that every child ought to be trained to think, and to feel, and to become conscious of the fact, that he is vitally related to God. This world is thrilling, pulsing, throbbing, with divine life, divine power, divine meaning; and more and more, as I grow older and think, I trust, more deeply, more and more do I see God everywhere. I look upon the stars shining, but I cannot stop with the star. It is the life, the power, the mystery, the wonder of God, that looks down at me from the night sky. I look upon the majesty of the ocean. It is not merely the movement of certain drops of water, or collections of drops, that I see. This rhythmical motion, this majesty, this mystery, this moaning, laughing sea, is just one outshining of the infinite and eternal life of God. I look into human history. I do not regard it any longer simply as an aimless struggle and conflict of political forces, ambitions, hopes, and fears of these or those men, or this or that ruler, or this or that king. It is the power, the life, the breath of God, that I see and feel everywhere, — humanity uplifted and led on by the inspiration of this power. And so, when I look into a human face, — the face of a friend or a loved one, — I do not stop with the eyes, with the brain, with the soul, of that friend. All this friendship, all this tenderness, all this beauty, all this love, are simply utterances, words, outshinings of the divine. And so I would have every child taught, first, to believe that he stands ever, in the light or in the dark, in pleasure or in pain, in business reverses or successes, in

hope or in fear, in struggle with right and wrong, in the immediate presence of God, — that he is dealing first hand with God. There is is no power but of God. There is no explaining any phase or form of this universal life, if he be left out.

Then I would have the child taught that in the law of this God, as manifested, no matter how, no matter where, is the law of his life; that he is not free in the sense of being at liberty to do according as he wills; that he is free only to know and to obey. I would have every child's conscience thus trained in the light of this one great, overmastering conviction.

Then I would have the heart touched. I believe that it is one of the most important things in the world that the child's sensitive nature should be roused so as to respond in love and tenderness and worship; that he should feel the motive force of love and of life, so that he should not only see what ought to be done, but be moved, *impelled*, to do it, and to feel that in this movement, these impulses, he is being played upon by the very hand of God himself.

I would have the sense of worship trained, so that every child, as he looks upon the mystery, the wonder, the glory, the beauty, of the world, should have his thoughts, his heart, his feeling, reach up to kneel, as it were, at the very foot of the throne which is the spring and source of all the wonder and glory that call out the admiration of the soul. This is what I mean by religious education, religious training.

You will see that this is something else than teaching the head merely, than learning of the discussions that constitute the theological controversies of the world; something else than being merely convinced that "my church" is the best in the world; something else than learning what is called sacred history, or sacred biography, or sacred geography. It is bringing into life, into active movement,

the real religious nature of the man, so that it shall be the mainspring and motive power of noble thought and feeling and living. This is first. Under whatever religious name, under the inspiration of whatever sacred literature, under the guidance of whatever religious teacher, under whatever theology, in whatever church, or in no church, if the religious nature be alive and the man live in close relation to God, this is the first great thing to be attained.

Now let me say a few personal words concerning the theatre of this kind of religious training. Where does the child get it as a matter of fact? We organize a Sunday-school; but what is that, — an hour a week for the children who attend regularly during forty weeks of the year? Where are the children the rest of the time, and what are the influences playing round them to develop or crush out their religious life? The larger part of the religious education of every child is that which he receives unconsciously, and which is perhaps bestowed unconsciously. How is it about our homes, and the religious influences there? What can we hope to do with our children one hour a week, if all the influences during the rest of the week are either indifferent or adverse? Then as regards this matter of home training. You know that sometimes a plant that you may try to care for in your home will wither and die. It is the atmosphere that kills it, or it lacks the proper soil. All your love and solicitude are in vain: it merely will not grow. There are certain types of plants that will live under the edge of the glacier among the Alps. Put them in the tropics, and they will wither and die. So there are tropical plants which, if you take from their soft, warm, moist beds and sunny skies, and place on the mountain side, will cease to be. It is a matter of situation, of atmosphere. The atmosphere must be favorable to the development of the religious nature in a child. It is of more importance than any direct influence that we can

bring to bear on his nature. Take a child in a home where all the influence and atmosphere are what we may call — what Jesus called — worldly. Worldly, as Jesus used that word, meant simply the conventional life, dealing with external affairs instead of caring for the deepest and highest spiritual things. Suppose a child is made to feel, if a caller comes in, that the particular thing to be thought of about that caller is the way she happens to be dressed. That is the thing which is emphasized after the caller has gone. Or the discussion turns, perhaps, on the street that this person lives in, the kind of house she has, how much money she may possess, — these are made the prominent things in discussing her. This cannot fail to give the child the impression that external matters are really the great things of this world. How many parents make this impression on their young minds quite thoughtlessly! They do not believe so themselves, or they would not admit it; but these are the impressions that the child's mind receives week by week and year by year. The character, the culture, the tenderness of this caller, her benevolence, her willingness to help, — these things, if the parents were asked, they would say were greater; but the impression that is made is that they are not of chief importance. The atmosphere of the home is not in sympathy with religious development: it is irreligious. Then the books the children read, the companions with whom they are associated, things that touch the child morning, noon, and night, every day in the week, and every week in the year, color, shape, control, his life. These are the things that are making or marring his religious development more than the direct efforts to counteract them that can be made by the Sunday-school teacher or than can be made by the parents themselves. For, curious as the contradiction is, there are large numbers of parents who instruct their children, so far as words go, in one way, and *impress* them, so

far as their influence and life go, another way. Their precepts are right; the atmosphere with which they surround the child is wrong.

Let us turn for one moment to the matter of church attendance. I am always glad when I see children at church; and I am sorry that so few children attend Unitarian churches, or any churches, perhaps. The Sunday-school is usurping the place of the church to such an extent that it is thought not proper to take the children to church. I wish every single child in this parish might be in church every Sunday morning. Suppose they do go to sleep: who cares? I believe that the influence of this habit of being in church — of feeling that they are a part of it, of feeling that it is expected of them that they will come — is more important than anything else that you can give in the way of religious training. If the church is not worth your attending, if it does not stand for your highest ideal of religious thought and religious labor, then I would not have the children go, and I would not go myself. But if it is the best realization of your religious ideal that you can practically attain, then I believe that there is nothing finer for the children than that they should grow up to feel that they are a part of it. If I could have my way, and it came to be a matter of choice between the Sunday-school and the church, I would abolish the Sunday-school. But that is not practical. The children expect the Sunday-school; they wish for it. If we do not organize one that will teach them the things that we believe, they will attend one where they will be taught things that we do not believe, and in ways which we do not believe. But I do think that it is a calamity when children are taught that the Sunday-school is theirs, and that the church is not. What is the result of it? In large numbers of cases, when they have outgrown the Sunday-school, as they think, and have cultivated no taste for the church, they are all abroad,

having no religious tastes, no religious ideals, no religious passion, no religious devotion. It is not necessary, as I have tried to make plain, that the child should have clear intellectual conceptions as to what is going on in the church. It is the atmosphere, the impression, the habit. How large a part of success in life, in every direction, is this matter of habit! You take a boy into your business, and he is not worth anything for one or two years. He must be moulded and shaped to the business. Every faculty must become habituated to it, so that he shall know it in every direction, and do right because it is second nature. Then he becomes valuable to you. If a person wishes to learn the piano, years are spent in training the fingers, until they are habituated to the action of the keys. So in every department. The matter of habit is just as necessary in the religious development of the child. If a child should go to church every Sunday after it is no longer an annoyance to its parents or those around it, and should sleep every Sunday for the first five or seven years, and then only gradually wake up, get a snatch of a sentence, and wonder what it meant; hear a name, a word, that starts a train of thought; listen to a strain of music, and be lifted by it and sent off into a dream of what the high things of the spirit might stand for; note an air of reverence, of consecration, and feel that these people are here for something, because they believe in something, because they stand for something, because they wish to achieve something for humanity; get a sense of that *esprit de corps* to be found in every earnest congregation, — I believe that just these things would be of unspeakable importance in the religious development and culture of that child.

Then, as to the Sunday-school, since it exists, we must make the best of it. But when I appeal to people to help it by becoming teachers, they do not know enough, they

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are not good enough, they have not time enough. Who does know enough? Who is good enough? Who has any spare time? How is the work to be done, then? If nobody is to do it, it will not be done. If one is to do it, why then one more than another? If you are not willing to help train your own children, what claim have you on the work and devotion of somebody else? It is not an uncommon thing for parents who might help in the Sunday-school, but do not, to find a great deal of fault with those that come and do the best they can. This seems hardly equal or fair. Let us all take hold of this work, and do the best we can. And let every one feel that it is not a matter of inclination or whim, but that there is an earnest duty connected with it. And remember that I do not want anybody for a teacher in my Sunday-school who thinks he is very wise. I certainly do not want anybody who is possessed with the idea that he is very good, and I really do not want anybody who has nothing else to do. I want just human people, loving, tender, devoted people, who appreciate that here is something that is worth their doing, and are willing to do the best they can. I do not care so much whether you teach theology, or how much religious history and biography you teach, or whether you are up concerning the missionary journeys of St. Paul, and are able to talk about them very intelligently. These are matters of interest and importance; but the principal thing, after all, is that you should bring the children with whom you come in contact close to a warm heart, that you should surround them with an atmosphere of devotion. Teach them a sense of duty; make them feel that life is noble, true, holy, high; that there is something grand to live for; and that they may become a part of this great effort of humanity to lift up the world.

This matter of religious education, then, is just this: it is believing in God; it is loving and reverencing all

truth, all sacrifice, all noble action; it is devotion to that which is best; it has power in it to dignify and redeem human life. If I had my choice whether my boy should become rich, successful as a politician or a statesman, a leader in society, a leader in the law, or distinguished as a scientist, an artist, or a musician, and be, not in a bad sense, but in the common sense, irreligious, or whether his whole religious nature should be properly trained, kindled into life, made active, supreme, controlling, I would choose this religious development above everything else. For it means duty, it means love, it means trust, it means peace, it means hope, it means linking the life with God, so that one shall feel that he is a part of the great movement of the divine life through the ages. It means redemption from everything selfish, petty, mean, small. It means that we shall be at last one note in that song of universal triumph that shall signalize the deliverance of mankind from all sorrow and all wrong.

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THE REAL JESUS.

WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST? — Matt. xxii. 42.

WE are sometimes asked whether if Jesus of Nazareth were now to appear among us, teaching as he taught almost two thousand years ago, there is the smallest likelihood that he would be received and welcomed to-day as a divinely appointed leader of mankind. It is no doubt true that there are many among his professed followers, perhaps even a majority, who would fail to see in the actual living man such qualities as they have ascribed to the Christ of their theology. But the question, as it is commonly asked, is hardly a fair one. Every great man of the past would be a somewhat strange object to our eyes, if he could come back to earth clothed in the habits and customs of the age in which he lived. Suppose a man were to be born out of our modern life with the spirit and character and thought of Jesus, all that was incidental to that far-off time and place being changed for what is incidental to our time and place; is there any reason to doubt that he would be joyfully and widely received by us as a true prophet of the soul? If there is reason to doubt this, it must be because the world is now so far advanced as to render the moral and spiritual genius of Jesus not particularly noticeable when compared with the attainments of the modern mind. But are we not apt to exaggerate

the achievements of recent years far beyond their rightful importance as measured against life's highest qualities and attributes? Almost all the wonderful advance of science upon which we pride ourselves has taken place since Shakspeare's day. We now know many things that were undiscovered when he wrote; but does any one feel that his ignorance of these matters constitutes a serious blemish on Shakspeare's genius? Does our superior knowledge lift us so near the level of his rare insight and wonderful command of language that we cease to hold his magnificent gifts in reverence? Now and again one hears the opinion that Shakspeare is a much overrated poet; but it does not come from any source at all likely to enlighten us as to what true poetry is. If Jesus has anything like the greatness of soul that has been attributed to him, the world has as yet made no advance which brings him down to the level of ordinary human nature.

No mind at the present time is well qualified to form a judgment on this question unless it carefully guards itself from the intrusion of popular prejudices that abound on both sides. One false extreme always begets an opposite false extreme, and the truth between the two only appears to him who can emancipate himself from the passions of controversy. We see, for example, that when the English church had sunk deep into idolatrous practices under the Stuart kings, the natural result was the rise of a Puritan party which made war upon all that was beautiful in religion. We denounce and deplore the idolatry that then filled the Church; but equally we lament the mad zeal of Cromwell's soldiers, who wasted and destroyed treasures which cannot now be replaced, and established a traditional belief in the virtue of ugliness which even yet it is hard for their successors to shake off. So with one portion of the world holding absurd and superstitious views of the

nature of Christ, and making their lip-service of his name everywhere unpleasantly prominent, it is natural that for the time being an opposing class should arise, which seeks to destroy, not only the idolatry, but that which men have made the idol of their thoughts. Never were Christians more stanch than they who founded the New England Commonwealth; but when these men observed in their churches people who longed for unlawful rites, covertly making courtesies at every mention of the name of Jesus that occurred in the Puritan service, they were shocked and horrified. What wonder, then, if in our minds the old Adam of rage and resentment rises with some vigor when we still see a formal reverence paid to the name of Christ which is denied to the name that stands for the Infinite Father of all souls! While there is a religion unspiritual enough to raise this human image higher in its reverence than the thought of an unembodied Deity, we may expect to witness the manifestation of an anti-Christian sentiment, which is but the rebound from one to another false extreme. But they who care more for truth than for controversy or partisan success will be as slow to join an anti- as an ultra-Christian cry. The present disposition of many minds to throw off the Christian name does not stand for the sober second thought of free inquiry. It is rather a somewhat too passionate revolt from forms of Christianity that are merely conventional and traditional, and will in the end, we may confidently expect, take up again with gratitude and pride much that it now flings aside.

There is another reason why it is difficult for some people at the present time to form a just estimate of the life of Christ. The world does not advance along all lines of progress at the same time, but its energies tend rather to run out so exclusively in special directions that in other ways there is temporarily a positive decline. Now the

scientific spirit so rules our day as to occasion a very noticeable decline of what, for want of a better title, we may call the spiritual imagination, — the power to appreciate life on its poetic side, and to read that language of symbols which is the only speech whereby the finest and highest faculties of the soul have ever succeeded in uttering themselves. There is certainly no reason why a man may not be at the same time a good mechanical engineer and a good musician; but no one will maintain that a course of instruction and training in engineering makes one a good musician. There is no reason why one may not be at the same time scientific and religious; but it does not follow that by scientific studies he can awaken and train those powers of the mind which have hitherto found in religion a source of unspeakable joy and strength. It is often said that there should be, and can be, no conflict between science and religion, in so far as both lay hold upon the truth. But it may nevertheless be true that by reason of the different language which they speak science and religion may sadly fail to understand each other, and may be betrayed into much needless antagonism. Looking back to past centuries, we can see that religion, when it held almost undisputed sway of the world, failed utterly to understand the rising power of science, whose early apostles it imprisoned and killed. Now that science has grown to take equal, and perhaps superior, command of the intellectual forces of the age, it also fails to understand and appreciate religion.

Let me beseech those who have been born into a world that has become suddenly somewhat new and strange to many whose heads are not yet white, that they will give this point careful and candid consideration. It is all very well to erect statues and sing hymns to the martyred Bruno, and to felicitate ourselves that we have escaped

the tyranny under which he suffered. But as earnest men and women, facing the deep problems of life and death and immortality, let us not think that we can thus escape or satisfy the hunger of our souls. I charge that under the rule of the modern scientific spirit the noblest power of humanity, that of spiritual imagination, has fallen somewhat into decline; and if, as it sometimes seems, the life and words of Christ are losing their hold upon us, it is not the intellectual greatness, but this spiritual defect of the time which largely accounts for that fact.

Did not that truly great man, Charles Darwin, — great with all his narrowness and pathetic limitations, — confess that his love of music and poetry had been starved out of him during his long life of exclusive devotion to scientific observation and experiment? Through long disuse a most important part of his nature had become no better than a withered arm, and he had ceased to be either a judge or a critic of two great arts that have always displayed wonderful power to move the souls of men. One is not making random accusations, but has the warrant of deliberate confessions made by competent witnesses, in saying that to very many minds the whole realm of religious conviction and enthusiasm is now as a sealed book. They do not know what it means that their fellows are stirred by such religious emotions as appear to take hold upon them. They have no power to enter into or measure the ideas which evidently have controlled some of the greatest intellects. The trouble is that they attempt to read the creeds of their fellows as if these were — what the ignorant assume them to be — scientific statements or descriptions of spiritual realities; whereas these creeds are, so far as they are anything worth serious consideration mere, figurative expressions, — more or less adequate symbols of what no man is able to define in exact scientific

fashion. It is easy to see what the creeds of Calvinism say, and how they read to the literal mind; but it is not so easy to see what Calvinism meant to those strong-hearted men who fought the battle of liberty throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, though it evidently stood for something more than the stupid literalism from which the Church of our day is trying to escape.

Of course, it does not follow that the beliefs which have once served the spiritual imagination can be made to serve forever. But none the less we foolishly defraud ourselves if we will not allow our spiritual imagination to speak; and in the nature of the case its speech must be, not the language of science, but that of religious poetry. We of this time easily acquire a too superstitious regard for what we call facts, easily fall victims to a morbid fear of being deceived by the symbols that stand for unutterable truths. Go place yourself before Raphael's great masterpiece, that most devout picture of saintly motherhood, and try to "understand" its charm! Discover, if you are able, what trick of drawing or coloring it is that so witches the eyes and the hearts of all beholders! So far as this secret is concerned, you will have, I think, your labor for your pains, and will probably find in the midst of your straining analysis that for the time being the picture has lost its power to charm. So, it appears to me, there is a type of the modern mind which stands before the portrait of Christ, its curious gaze so bent to discover what it calls the "historic facts" that it is temporarily blind to the great flood of sublime thoughts and feelings which has streamed from that wondrous symbol upon the hearts of many Christian generations. It is a great mistake to think that reverence for that great and stainless life is a sign of mediæval aims and tendencies. The world moves fast, but not fast enough to allow us to class a man like

Theodore Parker with an outworn conservatism; and he was one who clung to the divine truth and beauty in the life of Christ as the very soul and basis of what is best in our world of to-day.

If one declares it to be part of his artistic creed that the so-called Venus of Milo is only an ordinary production of the sculptor's chisel, and that the marble forms which adorn our cemeteries and parks are quite equal or superior to that ancient work, perhaps nothing can be said to him save that the enlightened perceptions of the world at large are not likely to endorse his verdict. To that enlightened judgment of mankind, they who think they see in the life of Christ an excellence that places him spiritually first among men, may confidently appeal. Though the portrait of that life which has come down to us is sadly defaced and incomplete, yet there is something in this broken image which easily surpasses the grace and majesty of every other figure in history. What need to ask, or how shall we determine whether he was absolutely sinless and infallible? It is enough if we see that his spirit and thought clearly mark the loftiest height to which human life has attained, and behold in him the qualities that are at last to redeem and regenerate our race. The question whether we may rightfully behold such pre-eminence in him is not to be settled alone by any amount of criticism applied to the details of the Gospel narrative. After this criticism has done its work, the question still recurs, What impression, taken as a whole, in view of what it was and what it accomplished, does this life make upon our minds?

A famous author belonging to our own period, who hated every kind of sham with a perfect hatred, and must not be lightly accused of indulging in feigned emotion, once visited Jerusalem. Of course he went to the Church

of the Holy Sepulchre, and to the alleged tomb of Jesus; "into which," he says, "be it authentic or not, no man can enter without a shock of breathless fear, and deep and awful self-humiliation." A life which so clings to the scenes among which its forces were spent that nearly two thousand years after it was ended, a man like Thackeray was moved to this confession of its command over his heart, must be worthy the profoundest study; and if we can in any degree fathom the secret of that life and of its power over men, it will be knowledge of the most helpful and instructive kind. That secret I think it is not hard to find, though it is not easily told in adequate language. Some hint of it we may try to communicate; only let it be remembered that the simplest things of life are often hardest to describe, and that the experience of the soul goes much deeper than words have power to follow.

Jesus himself summed up the Law and the Prophets in this one phrase, Love God and man. For him, this was the root of all duty, the crown and completion of all character. If he lived out this maxim, he succeeded in reaching what was to him the summit of human excellence. He did live out this maxim; and passing by all minor considerations, we may take that as the true key to what he was and what he has accomplished.

Nowhere else, it appears to me, either in the annals of history or among the creations of the poetic imagination, have we the record or the image of a human soul so completely governed in all its acts and thoughts by a love for man so perfect and divine. Such freshness, spontaneity, and intensity of spiritual impulse cannot easily arise out of our modern life. Of necessity, the continuance of intellectual growth has made us too self-conscious; and it will be long yet ere the completed cycle of spiritual development brings us to a point where the

race can once more live out, easily and naturally, the higher impulses of the soul. No studied action can equal the perfect grace of a young child's gestures, which are made in entire unconsciousness of self; and the trained student of human nature should look instinctively for the best example of a life shaped and guided by incarnate love, in an age nearer than our own to the childhood of the world. It should be as evident to him that the best conditions for such a life are found in that earlier time, as it is to the botanist that a certain flower will thrive best in some particular latitude. This warm, deep tide of wonderful love; this outpouring of a flood of divine compassion over the world's want and wretchedness; this entire devotion of the heart to the good of one's fellow-men, — leaving no room for any trace of vengeful feeling or desire, — all this is high above us, almost as the heavens are high above the earth. It would be most unjust and unfair, in the light of such knowledge of other religions as we now possess, to say that nowhere else is there any approach to the perfect love of Christ. We should hold no quarrel, even with one who thinks he sees in other great saints who have been loving and stainless, the equal of Christ's perfections. It is a question only of what one sees, and let us expect no man to report otherwise than as his vision dictates. To me it seems that there is in the love of Christ distinctly a more healthful tone, as compared with those who may be called in some sense his peers. The suspicion of something morbid in their hearts, I do not find in him. He did not merely pity men for their wrongs; he loved them for the god-like capacities he saw in them. He did not look up to the heavens in anger, indignation, or despair for the wrongs suffered here below, but only in patient confidence that these would be at last redressed. He looked upon the

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imperfect hearts of men, his brethren, as the gardener may look upon his plants. He loved them for the beauty they might unfold, and he longed with passionate earnestness to help the Almighty Father in lifting up and strengthening their feeble life. Many others have loved in this fashion, — praised be the name of the Lord. But in the love of Christ, there is a steadfastness, an intensity, and a serenity quite beyond any other human source from which this wondrous light of the spirit has shined upon us.

But still more clear and unquestionable is his supremacy, when we come to speak of his love toward God. Then we must give him a place so much higher than all others, where he stands so unmistakably kinglike in his sole superiority, that we are ready to bow our hearts before him with the words "Lord and Master" upon our lips. None other has lived in such perfect consciousness of a divine presence within and round about him. None other has so walked with God, or so felt his spirit blended in intimate communion with the Infinite. Never in word or deed is he found shut up within his own individual self, but always he shows us his deep feeling that self-hood is linked with Deity. Who can wonder at the tendency to worship him, since he so lived in and breathed forth a divine atmosphere that his disciples felt, when under the spell of his personal influence, they were, as nowhere else, in the presence of God. Though their own sight was too dim to see all that was revealed to him, yet when he spoke to them of the Father's kingdom, in such accents of authority as only sight could give, they also, with the eye of faith, saw a world divinely made and governed, and a future bright with the promises which infinite love and goodness supply. No other life began to disclose to them, nor is there any other which unfolds to us, such sustained and unclouded consciousness of union with the

life of God. Many philosophers have taught the immanence of the divine presence; but no other has so lived in this truth and felt its kindling power in every smallest movement of will and thought and desire.

And this, the true glory of the life of Christ, is the chief glory of all human existence, so far as men are able to attain it. The real measure of a human soul is the extent to which it has come into rightful relations with the existence beyond itself. We have all partially adjusted ourselves to some small fraction of the universe, and we feel transient intimations of bonds that knit our spirits into close and unbroken relationship with the Universal Life. Here was one who felt that widest bond of union as vividly and as deeply as we realize any of the special relationships that join us to our fellow-men. His soul therefore reflected, not merely an image of the kingdom of heaven on earth, but something of the strength and beauty of that infinite order which comprehends all ages and all worlds. The life of Christ is our witness that the spiritual development of man may be carried so high, at length, that the common heart shall become sensitive to and aware of the life that pervades all things, and shall know itself enfolded by the Divine Presence, even as our bodies are held within the embrace of the invisible air.

I am persuaded that if we are thinking, as Saint Paul was, of the highest interests of our race and of the ways in which its largest good is to be wrought out, we must still say with him, "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." Of course this is not saying that one must believe on him after the fashion of the popular religion of our time, in order to reach heaven; or that other races to whom his name is unknown are eternally lost. It is saying, however, that, for the present at least, no man and no party of men will

be able to invent a basis, or a bond of union, to displace that single personality by which the Christian world is bound together. It means that the great currents of benevolence, philanthropy, and moral reform will, with us, continue to bear his name; that every good cause will in the end draw most of its recruits from the churches where his influence is one of the strongest of living forces; and that the source of all this power which his life still manifests, is not delusion, but the presence in him of a commanding truth, whose radiance not all the mists of superstition have been able to quench. No true friend of his Gospel will ask to have everything done formally and officially in his name. But no real gain will anywhere result from making war upon that name as if it were a symbol of slavery and error. It is, and will remain a symbol, dear to the hearts of millions, of the very highest thoughts and the holiest love they can conceive; and there is no greater work to be done on earth, at this time, than that of revealing to the common sight what deeps of wisdom and what heights of excellence are in that sacred life, lying as yet unrealized and unexplored.

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THE NATURAL ORIGIN OF INCARNATION BELIEFS.

The great affirmation of religion is that God and man are in essence one. All forms of anthropomorphism, all types of incarnation, are but varied expressions of this one affirmation. God and man are in essence one: in its low and far beginnings Religion said that, when it personified the powers of the sky and the storm and the sea, when it told their biographies in personal myths and legends, when it carved their faces with human features and gave them perhaps a hundred human hands, when it endowed them with all of the human vices and some of the human virtues. This we call anthropomorphism. Man could not do otherwise. He cannot do otherwise. He has to imagine, to *image*, the invisible in terms of the visible, the unknown in terms of the known. He has to think of the Power without in terms of the Power within; that is, in terms of self-consciousness. Though we will to mask the process by refusing to christen the image in the mind, no less it is there, — the image; and the image is always a personal one, dimmed away perhaps into vagueness, shredded away perhaps into fragments; the human only approximated, it may be, as when Egypt, singling out some part or quality of the human for the god, divinized cats and rams and bulls. But always and every-

where man has had to think of, still has to think of — that is, to mentally image — the unknown Powers in terms of self-consciousness. Do we call them "impersonal"? Try as we may to disguise it, the impersonal is still the imp of the personal. One way or another, therefore, man always makes God in his own image. The Genesis verse, where God says, "Let us make man in our image," only states the same truth the other way round.

The belief in incarnation is but one form of this anthropomorphism. Given the God, and grant him the wish to make himself visible, he must choose between rock, tree, brute, and man, or these enlarged to their greatest; let rock stand for the sky and the star and the mountain and sea. According to the chronicles of human religion, the unseen Powers have chosen all these forms of self-manifestation. But when they would manifest themselves at their fullest of being, inevitably they have climbed into manhood. They could not do otherwise, because, so far as we yet have explored either earth or the heavens or the hells, we find, or at least we are able to recognize, nothing above human semblances. As the very devils are our "bosses" with horns, so the very archangels are our saints with wings. If we knew anything higher than man, our gods would have taken that higher form. As it is, they have to content themselves with the human. So here and there over the earth we find these theophanies, — the gods becoming man, as men have believed.

ORIENTAL AND GREEK INCARNATIONS.

Of all the lands whereon they have lit in flesh, the lands of the Hindu and the Greek have given, perhaps, the most gracious examples. "In Vishnu land, what avatar?" asks Browning, in his poem, of Waring, the

traveller. For in Vishnu land the god has not done arriving: he is still breaking forth in the flesh, as many a time before he has come, — now as the fish that saved the good Manu at the time of the deluge, and now as the tortoise that supported the world in the churning throes of creation, and now as the man-lion who routed the demon-king, and now and again in some favorite hero of legend, and most of all in the good Krishna, — he of miraculous birth and the shepherd companions, he who, in the Bhagavad-Ghita, proclaims himself the Supreme, the Redeemer; in all his incarnations, gentle, humane, self-sacrificing, and a god that bringeth salvation. So with the Buddhas, who from the mystic other-world emerge as men, whenever this world needs redemption. Four-and-twenty times had they come before our Buddha appeared; and already, in Thibet, the worshippers worship the unborn Buddhas elect who are yet to come in the flesh, named and known in advance from their future feats of salvation. The Orient loves incarnation, and has what it loves. Only forty-five years ago the Incarnate God was executed in Persia. His title there was the Bab, or "Gate," — the young prophet whose lofty morality, whose charm of personal presence, whose power to inspire lowly followers to be heroes and martyrs of faith, whose fate after six years of teaching, whose idealization in legend after his death and before, are such correlates all to the story we love so well; as Estlin Carpenter has just been reminding us. Only three years ago the Bab's successor died in Acre, — again the Incarnate God, as his followers thought.

But more familiar to us are the incarnations of Greece. "Imitate God," was the conscious aspiration and maxim of Plato; but "Let the gods imitate man" was the unconscious law by which the ancient myths of Plato's race had already constructed themselves.

God's manlikeness was fundamental in the Greek mind. Coleridge's phrase, "the fair *humanities* of old religions," was right both in its noun and in its adjective for the Greek religion of old. Very human the maidens that glanced in the forest and stream; very human allies haste from the skies to aid the heroes of Homer's tales of battle; and the marble statues that glowed in the shrines of the temples and lined the Greek streets tell what the average Greek would hardly have been surprised to meet in the flesh. Had he not been brought up on the stories of incarnation? and here was the story in marble. That scene in Acts, of the hill-town in Asia Minor, where the two apostles were taken, the old man for Zeus, and the young man for Hermes, and barely escaped from the sacrifice offered them, — and then barely escaped being sacrificed, — is, doubtless, a glimpse of the mind of ten thousand towns of the time. And what shall we say to the apotheosis of the Roman emperors as another glimpse at the incarnation capacities of the time in which Christianity rose? It has been described as a "popular religion" of the provinces in the second century, — that deification of the man who as emperor embodied the power and the majesty of Rome, the God-man of Rome, with altars and temples and priesthoods dedicated to him.

THE BIRTH-STORY OF CHRISTENDOM'S GOD-MAN.

And now we must come to our own Christian religion, which, *because* it is a lofty religion, has emphasized as no other religion on earth has done this man-likeness of God. Even when we name God "Our Father," we humanize him. But it is only a small part of Christendom that, outside of the prayer of Jesus, prays to "Our Father" by name, — so small a part that, practically, we may say, *The God of Christendom is a man.*

How came it to be so? The half-familiar story can be told in three years or three moments. Shall we try to hint it once more in the moment way? It is a story of the meeting and blending of two great rivers of thought. One was the Jewish dream of a *Christ*, a Prophet-king, who would deliver the people from the oppressor, and lift them up to righteousness and glory, and establish the kingdom of heaven on earth. It was the old national dream, springing from the older and deathless faith that the Jews were God's "chosen people." The other stream of thought was Greek. All around Jewry lay the bright Greek world. That world, too, had its old religion; but in the time of Jesus the old faiths were dying and dropping from the mind, like brown leaves from the trees of November. In their place monotheistic philosophies were rising; and one idea among the Greek thinkers was that God creates all things by his *Logos*, his Living Word. It is easy to think of a word as projected outside of the uttering mind, and having operant force of its own; easy from this to personify that word as living; easy, then, if it be God's Word, to conceive of it as a secondary God, acting as Creator, Inspirer, and Providence. We ought not to find the idea hard to understand, if we think we understand our Emerson's phrase, "The good laws are *alive*," or his line, "And *conscious law* is king of kings." This Logos idea for the Greek had its rise in old Platonic and Stoic sources; but Philo, the Greek-minded Jew of Alexandria, living when Jesus lived, gave it clearest expression and vogue. Now, when Paul bore Christianity out into the Greek world, — thereby saving it from being a tiny Jewish sect of which we might never have heard, — the "Christ" he preached was already in his mind a being far above a merely Jewish Christ. He was a new Adam, the Image of God, a

universal Christ. And Greeks who heard of this Christ soon began to say, "This is no other than our Creative Word of God *made flesh*, and come on the earth as man." So Jewish "Christ" and Greek "Word" began to blend into one being, and in that blending the God of Christendom was born. *In that blending the God of Christendom was born.* The Jew had furnished the human, the Greek had furnished the divine, element; the Jew furnished the ethical, the Greek the functional, element; the Jew furnished the historic and the temporal, the Greek furnished the transcendent and eternal element of the new god. Jew gave him body, Greek gave him soul. The figure is Jew, the transfiguration is Greek. Son of Man, Jew, — Son of God, Greek. An august ancestry! And both parts were essential to the "incarnation."

The Gospel of John, so called, the Greek Gospel of the four, and the latest written, is the biography of this new Jesus. It is one of the books of the world's unsparable scripture, but we seek in vain in it for a Sermon on the Mount or for parables of the kingdom of heaven. Its emphasis is not, as in them, on morals and life, but on the person of the Christ, the Word and Light of God, that "lighteth every man who cometh into the world," and that at last took flesh and dwelt among men, full of grace and glory. As years went by, the emphasis upon the person of the Christ grew greater. John's Gospel shows the thought as it was, perhaps, about the year 125. Justin Martyr, a generation later than that, expands the thought a little, dwelling more than John upon the spiritual and essential Christ, of whom every race partakes: Abraham and Socrates, for instance, were Christians in virtue of the indwelling Christ, to whom they were obedient. The year 200 comes, and the word "*trias*" — a little later, in Tertullian's Latin, *trinitas* — is dropping into Christian theology, though

as yet with a very embryonic meaning; and Clement is teaching that Christ is the immanent God enstructured in the constitution of the world, enstructured in the human soul, — redemption being the progressive education of the human race by this indwelling teacher. The year 250, or thereabouts, brings Origen with his momentous and far-reaching phrase, "the eternal generation of the Son." It brings Sabellius, teaching that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are but three forms or aspects of the One. And it brings into Christian theology, but only to be repudiated at this time, the star-word *homoousios*. And the year 325 brings the Council of Nicæa, in which the doctrine of the Trinity flowers almost full-calyxed, and *homoousios* ("same-natured," "consubstantial") becomes the test of orthodoxy; and Christ is henceforth "very God of very God." Yet the Trinity was but a midway point in the mighty speculation! What is the nature of the Christ? How is he perfect man, yet perfect God? has he two natures, or but one? Has he two wills, or only one? Over such problems the Greek Christian world thought and wrote and quarrelled for three centuries more. Council after council met to settle them, and met in vain.

OUR COMMENT: (1) THE INCARNATION A BLESSED FAITH FOR THAT TIME'S NEED.

And what is our comment on this birth-story of Christendom's God, so much more wondrous to thought than the shining Christmas stories that make the pearl-gate to the Gospels, — what is our comment to-day, after fifteen hundred years, and in the light of the evolution idea? The comment looks in two directions. One way is this: Be the doctrine what we call true or what we call false, it is well for the world that Athanasius won the field of Nicæa. Well, for three reasons at least: —

(1) His triumph *made God real*, the Infinite, Absolute, Unknown God, — no less being than that, — real, — real as a person, real as sandals on feet and tunic on body and look in the eyes and words from the lip could make him; real, too, as a Goodness; real, too, as Love.

> "The very God! think, Abib; dost thou think?
> So, the All-Great were the All-Loving, too, —
> So, through the thunder comes a human voice
> Saying, 'O heart I made, a heart beats here!
> Face, my hands fashioned, see it in myself!
> Thou hast no power, nor mayst conceive of mine,
> But love I gave thee, with myself to love,
> And thou must love me who have died for thee!'
> The madman saith He said so: it is strange."

So writeth Browning's "Karshish": so say we with him, "strange"; and, fact or not, a blessed faith for that time's need. It was an immense equipment of faith for Europe to start on the stormy centuries that followed the break-up of the Roman Empire with a good God as solid-sure as incarnation had made him.

(2) Athanasius' victory made the *unity of God and man real.* This was in truth the great point at issue, the unity of God and man, not the unity of God with Christ as an individual. Men often fight, as they build, better than they know. The Christ was very man of very man, as well as very God of very God. In him the *whole race stood*, when the signers at Nicæa signed their names below that word *homoousios*, "consubstantial," — God and Son of God one in their nature. It is really much more to say *one with* than *like to.* It takes one into the family: it is the difference between the kin and the guest. And that is a difference almost worth quarrelling over. Had Arius triumphed, man as represented in Christ would have stood outside of God's being, the guest of his welcome, not the child of his

inmost nature. Again, we must own, it was a great equipment for faith to enter the stormy centuries of Europe's remaking with this fact — God and man one — locked fast in its creed. Even if the casket were as seldom unlocked for inspection of contents as the shrine that held the bone of a saint, the bone, the sacred fact, was there, dimly believed in, some day to kindle with resurrection.

A third gain should be credited to the incarnation belief, though perhaps an Arian victory would have been as good as the Athanasian for *this* end: the belief in the incarnation of God in Christ has made it forever impossible that any character less good than that of Jesus should be accepted as symbol of Christendom's God. The Father *must* be as good as the Son, and we know *he* was good. The Father must be as good as the Son whom we know. The words are simple, the thought is deep and far-reaching; for to make God as good as his saints is to put the axe to the root of a good many dogmas.

(2) THE INCARNATION A KINDERGARTEN STORY.

This, then, is half of our comment. It is well for the world that Christendom's God was born as the God-man. The other half of our comment is this: that the whole story is a *kindergarten* story. The great central doctrine of Christendom, God incarnate in Christ, is but an *object-lesson* in the kindergarten of faith. It puts a vast truth in the concrete form in which minds can most readily take it. The vaster a fact, the more we need the symbol, the type, the object-lesson, to represent it. If the symbol is not given us, we make one for ourselves, — we as individuals, we as the race. It is another psychological law, akin to the law with whose statement this paper began. You remember Tennyson's

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words, touching this very theme of ours in his musical way: —

"Where truth in closest words shall fail,
The truth embodied in a tale
Shall enter in at lowly doors.

"And so the Word had breath, and wrought
With human hands the creed of creeds
In loveliness of perfect deeds,
More strong than all poetic thought;

"Which he may read that binds the sheaf,
Or builds the house, or digs the grave,
And those wild eyes that watch the wave
In roarings round the coral reef.

. . . . . .

"See, thou that countest reason ripe
In holding by the law within,
Thou fail not in a world of sin,
And ev'n for want of such a type."

IS THE INCARNATION BELIEF A MISTAKE, THEN?

Is this saying that the central dogma of Christendom is an error, — an age-long, world-wide mistake? *Yes*, if the object-lesson be taken as literal history, or as the whole of the fact, its rounded and final statement. So is any kindergarten story an error, taken in that way. If *not* taken so, then *no*, not a mistake. The trouble is that of our theologies we like not to say "kindergarten," whereas theology is nothing *but* kindergarten statements. That, when we know it, is what makes it safe to have a theology. Till we do know it, it hardly is safe, though inevitable. And certainly too long, and too widely still, Christendom's kindergarten story has been taken to cover literally, and cover the whole of, the fact of incarnation. Even where it is not so taken, the advent of the God-man as unique historic fact there in Palestine, eighteen

centuries since, is the centre of faith as held by many of the wisest and best that we know, — by such men as Phillips Brooks, to name one for type. By no means does a man like Brooks hold that Christ was the whole of the incarnation. Most of the thoughtful orthodox theologians are saying to-day, I suppose, that the incarnation not only revealed God to man, but *man* to *himself*, — *his* oneness in nature with God. They are making return to the Gospel of Origen, Clement, Justin, and John, — that the same Word that took flesh in Jesus is the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. It is the old Stoic gospel of the immanent God, the *pre*-Christian gospel, which they are returning to with stress and delight. It is saying much the same thing to say that a new Christ is emerging in Orthodoxy, the human within the divine. It is Christ the All-Manly, Christ the All-Brotherly. "All-manly" means character: "All-brotherly" means daily service. And more than ever his true worship is felt to be imitation. "*Be* a Christ! Everything is summed up in that," cries Mr. Stead; and many an orthodox heart amens. None the less, rather all the more, in virtue of this participation in incarnation by men, allowed by the new Orthodoxy, is it true, as we were reminded last night, that the orthodox theology is becoming more and more Christo-centric. And this means that the Palestinian incarnation is still held as centre of faith by those wisest and best just referred to. So what shall we do? We must choose. The incarnation was either a Palestinian incident, an actual, localized, dated, historic fact, as our friends think it was, or else it is a kindergarten statement of a fact that transcends history, — an object-lesson which the mind of man made for itself at that wonderful era, and in which, hardly knowing, he has ever since faced in rimmed outline a rimless, infinite fact.

Now, just what the light of evolution gives us is the power, to some of us the necessity, of looking at old doctrines in this latter way. It is no longer a question of "error" *versus* "truth." Priestley, a hundred years ago, could treat of the dogmas that rose around the Sermon on the Mount and its preacher as the "corruptions" of Christianity. *We* cannot speak that way. The Nicene Creed rose as naturally — I would almost say, as grandly — in the mind of man as the Beatitudes rose in his heart. Jesus would have been amazed at it, to be sure; but bring him across the years, set him down in the Darwin century, train him a bit in its thought, then bid him look back to Alexandria and Nicæa and their incarnation-feat over his memory, and I think he would have recognized that feat's true nature, — *parable work!* He was a great kindergartner himself in his method; and living in our time would he not know an object-lesson in history, when he saw one? In every case — is that any too strong a statement? — in every case where an old orthodox doctrine differs from the later form of that doctrine, the earlier form is the concrete, dramatic "object-lesson," the "kindergarten" form of the truth aiming at statement, while our later form is some larger statement of the same fact or law, of which the object-lesson now appears as parable or symbol; *now* appears, — of course it did not so appear then, when men first wrought it in a glad sincerity as the verity of God. It is thus with the Incarnation doctrine, thus with Vicarious Atonement, thus with Original Sin, thus with Election, thus with all the old dogmas of Christendom, formulated three hundred, or fifteen hundred years, ago. In each and every case the difference between the earlier and the later form is not so much the difference between error and truth as men have been wont to think. It is much more the differ-

ence between the concrete and the universal, the illustration and the law. No: the true name for Orthodoxy is *not* "Error" any more than it is "Right-thinking." It is no good omen for Unitarianism when Unitarians break into applause over bright slurs upon Orthodoxy. Is that all the *acumen* we have, — not to say, all the heart?

I hardly know whether orthodox friends, however, will like the word "kindergarten" better than "error." It sounds less hostile, but more patronizing; and patronage is harder to forgive than hostility. And yet I suspect that many of them, so expansive is their own thought to-day, will thank you for suggesting it. It covers the case as they themselves recognize the case; that is, it is a word that leaves their old thought *true*, but their new thought *truer*, — this the large of which that was the small. And we all like to find we have grown, so long as we don't have to call our childhood an "error." So I recommend you to try the word — *gently*. I have tried it, and really thought it gave some orthodox friends relief. It is psychological and therefore illuminating.

THE LARGER AND TRUER FORM OF THE INCARNATION BELIEF, — GOD INCARNATE IN MAN.

The crown of my paper ought to be an answer to the question, "What is the larger form of the incarnation thought, of which the Palestinian incarnation is the concrete illustration?" I have short time to hint it.

That object-lesson, be it said, has much work yet to do in the world. Nevertheless, it is beginning to fade by expansion into the larger truth. This larger truth, of course, is *God incarnate in humanity*. It is the old pre-Christian, Stoic truth, *immensely intensified and deepened and ennobled by the eighteen centuries of Chris-*

tendom's object-lesson. I spoke of the help that Orthodoxy is already giving in the new interpretation of the truth, and I cannot but think that its part is destined to be far larger than ours in the beautiful transfiguration; for we are a very small body, and will be, I think, if true to our principles. They should still, and forever, lead onward, and give us our home, as before, among visions that must *wait* to be popular. But in simplest truth we may say that the larger incarnation is the central truth of Unitarianism, even as the smaller incarnation has been the central truth of the older Christianity; and that no *one* soul in modern time has been so eminent a prophet of this grander meaning as our own Channing. The distinctive faith of Unitarianism has never been its thought of God, although that gives us name: it has been our thought of man. It is our faith in the dignity of human nature. When this faith in the dignity of human nature comes full circle, it is faith in the intellectual and moral unity of God and man. It thus rounds again into a thought of God, and gives us back the incarnation doctrine in nobler form than ever, — God incarnate in humanity, not merely in the one man Jesus. This, I suppose, is what Dr. Hedge had in mind when he said that Unitarianism would better have been named "Humanitarianism." It certainly is the faith which Channing calls his "one sublime idea." "One sublime idea has taken hold of my mind: it is the greatness of the soul, its divinity, its union with God by spiritual likeness." "In ourselves are elements of the divinity." "All minds are of one family." One could quote passage after passage: it is Channing's constant emphasis. Emerson has it, of course, at the height of his ethical rapture. "If a man is at heart just, then in so far is he God: the safety of God, the immortality of God, the majesty of God, do enter into that man with justice."

God incarnate in man, in humanity! Break the thought into syllables. This very *body* of ours, its blood and its bone and its mystic nerve, the holy microcosm to his macrocosm; our *mind* thinking out his thoughts inbreathed, inspired, in us, — he the Raphael behind Raphael, the Newton behind Newton, the Edison behind Edison; his justice, his right, organizing itself in the instincts of *conscience*, the whispers and thunders of *ought;* he becoming incarnate in Garrison, incarnate in Frances Willard and their armies of followers, incarnate in myriads of saints hung upon many a cross; his heart of *love* beating in mothers and fathers and children, making two one the wide world over of life, and out of the oneness again repeopling his worlds; and waking in hearts here and there "love for every unloved creature, lonely, poor, or small," and so setting new ideals, new incarnations of love, at work in the world. "In thy face have I seen the Eternal," said dying Bunsen, looking up in the face of his wife bending over him. He spoke for millions of living. "God could not be everywhere, so he made mothers," said the old Jewish proverb with splendid audacity, voicing the fact of his incarnation that way. In the "Bonnie Briar Bush" book you remember how the poor girl comes home from her wayward London life to her hard, proud, righteous, heart-broken father in the home in the Highlands, and how she afterwards says to Marget, the wise woman-friend who sent for her, hinting the broken heart, — "It iss a peety you hef not the Gaelic," Flora said: "it iss the best of all languages for loving. There are fifty words for darling, and my father will be calling me every one that night I came home." "Fifty words for darling," and God put them all into just his one Gaelic tongue, an almost dead language at that, and into just a single softened heart. "Fifty words for darling," and the

Father of all trying to utter them every one in his millions of parents.

All this is mystic, is pantheistic, I know. Well, let it be so: the doctrine of incarnation is always mystic, often verges on pantheism, whether that be a bad or a good thing; and this is the new-old doctrine of incarnation, God in humanity. I know, too, that there is the fact of evil in man, and the conundrum waiting in ambush, Is the good God incarnate in evil? I shall just pass it by for now, only turning in passing toward the evolution thought that has light to throw on that problem. This new-old form of the doctrine calls incarnation continuous, progressive, ascendant, as well as universal. It recognizes *grades* of projection of the "Word" into the visible flesh. It recognizes lower and higher. The brute and the cousins below him, the angel and the cousins above him, come into the scope of the plan. It takes all nature, all history, and all of humanity to reveal the whole of the God. One can insist, if he will, on a foolish question, "But who *best* embodies the God?" And the answer for us, being human, of course is, The best man or best woman, — if you know the name. But you do not, for we do not know all God has done and is doing in history; and, therefore, any specific and emphasized answer is foolish. But with this question answered or not, the great fact is, — incarnation universal, continuous, perpetual, progressive. The true Church of the Incarnation is the Church of All Souls.

This is *human theology*. To-day there is a conscious, deliberate, scientific exploration of human nature to find man; and the result of the exploration is also the discovery of God. Of this human theology the poets as yet are the best interpreters. It is good to rise above differing doctrines to poetry that solves doctrines and makes them as one, to poetry that knows doctrines to

be lower forms of itself. The old theology argued too often, or tried to, from God to man: this human theology argues from man to the God. We find it of old in Jesus, who argued in both ways. We can find it to-day in the prose of professors and preachers. But we find it, perhaps, at its clearest in simple verses like Whittier's or Blake's. And who can forget the sounding rhythms of Browning, his "Saul," and how the argument climbs at the end, proving God's love from the man?

"Do I find love so full in my nature, God's ultimate gift,
That I doubt his own love can compete with it? here, the parts shift?
Here, the creature surpass the Creator, — the end, what Began? . . .
Would *I* suffer for him that I love? So wouldst Thou, — so wilt Thou!
So shall crown Thee the topmost, ineffablest, uttermost crown —
And Thy love fill infinitude wholly! . . .
'T is the weakness in strength that I cry for! my flesh that I seek
In the Godhead! I seek, and I find it! O Saul, it shall be
A Face like my face that receives thee; a Man like to me
Thou shalt love and be loved by, forever: a Hand like this hand
Shall throw open the gates of new life to thee! See the Christ stand!"

It is the boy-prophet's vision of the God who in the deeps of his nature is Infinite Man, his chant of the incarnation forever potential.

But we close with words that are simpler and larger still, — verses that once I found at the end of Theodore Parker's last sermon, the one in which he told, "What Religion may Do for a Man." With these in his heart he turned, and left his people, and died. The verses were not printed with the sermon, — perhaps strength did not allow him to read them; but there they wait in the manuscript, attesting a thought to have them his last words. They are by William Blake, "the mad poet," whose sanity named them

The Divine Image.

To Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love
All pray in their distress,
And to these virtues of delight
Return their thankfulness.

For Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love
Is God our Father dear;
And Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love
Is man, his child and care.

For Mercy has a human heart;
Pity, a human face;
And Love, the human form divine;
And Peace, the human dress.

Then every man, of every clime,
That prays in his distress,
Prays to the human form divine, —
Love, Mercy, Pity, Peace.

And all must love the human form,
In Heathen, Turk, or Jew.
Where Mercy, Love, and Pity dwell,
There God is dwelling, too.

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